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Letter dated 11 February 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest developments in the continuing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against the State of Israel.

Yesterday afternoon, at approximately 1.30 p.m. (local time), two terrorists dressed in civilian clothing and armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles disembarked from a stolen vehicle in the centre of the southern Israeli city of Beersheba and began indiscriminately spraying gunfire at soldiers and civilians in a nearby pastry shop. Security officers responded quickly and eliminated the terrorists, one of whom had a bomb strapped to his belt that was later detonated by police sappers in a controlled explosion. Lt Keren Rothstein, age 20, and Cpl Aya Malachi, age 18, were killed in the attack; four others were wounded, one critically, and 16 people were treated for shock. The terrorist organization Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

On Saturday, 9 February 2002, at approximately 10 p.m. (local time), an Israeli family was attacked as they were returning to their home in the community of Ma'aleh Ephraim by terrorists who fired from a car that was parked by the roadside. Atalia Lipobsky, age 79, was killed in the attack and her son, Victor, was lightly wounded.

These attacks represent the latest incidents in the ongoing Palestinian campaign of terrorism that has been detailed in my letters dated 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126), 22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November 2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September

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2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17 September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

The State of Israel holds the Palestinian Authority responsible for the continuation of terrorist operations against Israel in light of its ongoing role in fostering and supporting terrorism against Israelis, its role in helping to acquire increasingly deadly weapons to target Israeli population centres and its refusal to take concerted action to eliminate the infrastructure of terror that has taken root in the territories under its control. In particular, the Palestinian Authority remains unwilling to arrest known terrorists that are still at large and protected in its territory. In an action that typifies the Palestinian approach to fighting terrorism, a number of key terrorists who had been arrested under intense international pressure were released last week by Palestinian security forces. Among them were two key members of Islamic Jihad, Muhammed Tawalbeh and Ali Safouri, who had been included on an American list of 33 terrorists that the Palestinian Authority was to have arrested.

Compounding the danger of known terrorists operating freely in the Palestinian territories is the fact that new and dangerous weapons have become available to terrorists intent on increasing the level of civilian casualties. Yesterday, Palestinian terrorists fired two Kassam-2 rockets into Israel for the first time; a third rocket, which had been aimed at the southern Israeli cities of Sderot and Netivot, was destroyed by Israeli forces before it could be launched. The Kassam-2, which has a range of 10 to 12 kilometres and can carry a 4 to 6 kilogramme warhead, will enable Palestinian terrorist groups indiscriminately to target Israeli cities and inflict significant damage on major Israeli population centres. Yesterday's incident clearly demonstrates the Palestinian intent to inflict casualties on Israelis on a far larger scale. It should be recalled that an Israeli reserve unit last week captured eight such rockets as terrorist operatives were attempting to smuggle them to the Palestinian-

controlled town of Jenin, where they would have been in range of several Israeli cities. This incident was referred to in my letter dated 8 February 2002.

I should also like to recall that, in responding to my letter regarding the Karine A, the ship aboard which the Palestinian Authority was attempting to smuggle 50 tons of sophisticated weapons for use against Israel, the Palestinian Permanent Observer, in his letter dated 9 January 2002 (A/ES-10/137-S/2002/39), asserted that the notion of Palestinian responsibility in the Karine A affair "defies logic" and that "no sane person" could imagine "the possible use of weapons such as Katyusha rockets against Israel from a place such as Gaza, without catastrophic results". Since the writing of that letter, not only has it been definitively shown that the highest levels of the Palestinian Authority were involved in the attempt to smuggle arms aboard the Karine A, but the "unimaginable" firing of rockets into Israel from Gaza has indeed become reality. This situation represents a serious escalation of the conflict that will do nothing to advance the political goals of the Palestinian people. We continue to hope that the Palestinian leadership will come to terms with the reality that dialogue and negotiations hold the only hope for a peaceful and successful end to the conflict between our two peoples.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative